

MINUTES
SOUTH CAROLINA SHORELINE CHANGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Public Hearing
January 20, 2009 – 6:30pm-8:00pm

This document is not intended to be a meeting transcript, *per se*. It is a summary of key themes and some (though not all) of the background dialogue. The meeting summary's structure roughly parallels that of the meeting agenda but is not necessarily true to the temporal order of discussion. A digital recording of the meeting is located at SCDHEC-OCRM's Charleston office.

In Attendance:

1) Advisory Committee members:

Mark Caldwell,	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Mary Conley,	The Nature Conservancy
Paul Gayes,	Coastal Carolina University
Bob George,	G. Robert George & Associates, Inc.
Scott Harris,	College of Charleston
Tara Miller,	NOAA Coastal Services Center
Bob Van Dolah,	S.C. Department of Natural Resources
Fran Way,	Applied Technology and Management - <i>alt. for Chris Mack</i>

2) S.C. Department of Health & Environmental Control:

Dan Burger,	OCRM Communication & Technical Resources Director
Braxton Davis,	OCRM Science & Policy Director
Sadie Drescher,	OCRM Science & Policy Research Specialist
Barbara Neale,	OCRM Regulatory Director
Matt Slagel,	NOAA Coastal Management Fellow
Elizabeth Von Kolnitz,	OCRM Planning Director

Welcome / Progress to Date:

Braxton Davis, Director of OCRM's Science & Policy Division, provided a brief overview of the Shoreline Change Initiative and the purpose of the Advisory Committee. To date, there have been two orientation meetings focused on OCRM authorities and activities, the Committee work plan and process, and shoreline management in other states. The Committee has also examined research and information needs, and South Carolina's policies concerning retreat, beach renourishment, beachfront erosion control, and local beach planning.

Essentially, we've held a series of meetings to "brainstorm" ideas and issues related to beachfront and estuarine shoreline research and management, and we've asked volunteer subcommittees of the full committee to draft "policy options" that explore different ideas that have been generated thus far. Tonight I will go over the process and the basic ideas that have emerged during past meetings and that are being worked on by subcommittees. You will also find the initial ideas and subcommittee lists in the approved meeting minutes on the SCAC website.

The purpose of this initiative is to explore, in-depth, South Carolina's past experiences and continuing needs related to shoreline management in the coastal zone. To do so, we'll need significant public participation, and we're trying to provide a number of opportunities. In addition to the public comment periods at each Committee meeting, and general public hearings, we'll accept written comments at any time, and the draft report will be circulated widely for public comment - hopefully in June 09. We'll also include all public comments on the draft report in an appendix of the final report.

At this stage, the Committee has been exploring different policy options, but the policy options have not been finalized and any of them may be dropped, changed, or added at any time in the coming months. Completion of the Committee's Draft Report is anticipated in June 2009, with a tentative Final Report release date of July 2009.

Public Hearing:

A full digital recording of the public hearing is available at SCDHEC-OCRM's Charleston office. Committee members who were absent from this meeting are encouraged to make arrangements to listen to the recording.

Rob Rettew of the Hunting Island Beach Preservation Association (HIBPA) stated his belief that the definition of "retreat" needs to be clarified. Since many of the cabins at the south end of Hunting Island have been undermined and destroyed by erosion, the lease holders want to relocate their cabins (leases) landward to other parts of the island that were surveyed for hundreds of lots in the 1960s and 1970s. The current SC Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (PRT) policy is to not allow the cabin owners to relocate since

the cabins were built on leased land. PRT sites the retreat policy in the Coastal Tidelands and Wetlands Act as to why the cabin relocation cannot be allowed. Mr. Rettew believes there are contradictions in PRT's reading and understanding of the retreat policy, and he hopes that the Shoreline Change Advisory Committee will work to better define the state's policy of retreat. As proposed policies are drafted, Mr. Rettew also hopes the Committee considers working with PRT and the state to determine language that would not be restrictive and would potentially allow retreat to occur in this area in the future. He also mentioned that the privatization of the south end of Hunting Island could raise sufficient revenue for needed beach restoration work. Mr. Rettew submitted three letters of correspondence as written comments to the Committee, and these have been distributed to all Committee members.

Full Text of Comments from Mayor Bill Otis, Town of Pawleys Island:

I'm from Pawleys Island which, I hope most of you know something about. Basically 3 1/2 mile long barrier island, and one of the oldest seaside resorts in the United States. Pawleys was originally inhabited during the summer months in the late 1700's and early 1800s by Plantation families. A number of these original homes still remain. Year round residents number less than 200, but the season brings over 5000 people to this non commercial, totally low rise residential section of our state. Pawleys Island now contains the largest free public beach access parking area in Georgetown County.

I have been Mayor of Pawleys Island for over 11 years, and my family has owned beachfront property since 1951. I have seen hurricane Hazel and hurricane Hugo, as well as a number of lesser storms. There are several issues which are critical to Pawleys Island which, we believe, need careful and thoughtful considerations in any policy or regulation changes. We also believe we are not alone in our concern for these issues.

Groins are critical to the current survival of Pawleys Island and to its long term survival. The existing 23 groins comprising the Pawleys Island groin field were built in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The groins were repaired and reinforced 11 years ago along with some beach renourishment with sand recovered from a spit of land which had accreted to the south end of the island. A significant part of the island has added a completely new dune line which is from 30 to 100 feet in front of the previous dune line. The spit of land on the south end of the island (below the groin field) has rebuilt itself and moved the inlet nearly 1000 feet south. Instead of the groins creating erosion below the field, the area has accreted. . Our ability to be able to maintain this groin field is critical.

Sand for offshore renourishment must be allowed to be removed within the existing already narrow parameters for permitting. If consideration is given to a 1 mile offshore limit, then the cost of renourishment will increase significantly and put our beaches, which are economic drivers of our state, at greater risk. Consideration should be given to allowing inlet tidal shoals to be used, with appropriate permitting, for beach renourishment. Most of the sand in the shoals around us, for example, has come from the beaches in the first place.

Don't restrict emergency orders for sand scraping. We have had several instances where emergency scraping off of the beach has created dunes which have protected property as well as public parking areas until better solutions could be implemented.

Why do we have to get permits to erect sand fencing? On Pawleys we have to send over \$1000 worth of registered letters in order for the town to get a permit to install sand fencing, which is a proven method of dune protection and dune building.

Set backs should be considered on a more local basis. One size does not fit all. Communities should be encouraged to pass a more restrictive setback than the state setback. Pawleys Island has done this with a line that is more restrictive for about 2/3rds of the island. This line is based on conditions and is from only a few feet to hundreds of feet west of the ocrm setback line and carries basically the same restrictions as you have within the ocrm setback line.

Mr. Chaun Pflug addressed the Committee on behalf of the Bloody Point Property Owners Association on Daufuskie Island. From a macro perspective, Bloody Point requests that any and all changes to the current SC coastal management laws and policies not adversely impact or affect already approved and platted lots and constructed homes and not create any undue burden.

Bloody Point supports any and all emergency use of sandbags within the current definition of emergency orders.

Bloody Point does not support any attempt to remove any existing groin or eliminate the possibility of building additional new groins in inhabited areas.

Bloody Point is also concerned that construction and dredging of a proposed new SC-GA port about 2-3 miles off the coast of Daufuskie may significantly and adversely impact the lands of Bloody Point and Daufuskie Island as a whole. The construction and continued dredging could increase coastal erosion. Furthermore, Bloody Point believes that any change to SC coastal management law and policy should provide for specific means to mitigate, address, and counter any impact of any and all future dredging with respect to the proposed SC-GA port.
